

In 1940, Price was inducted into the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers. She had composed more than 300 works by the time of her death in 1953.

We can be very, very proud of these men and women. Their lives and legacies are important to the history of our country and the fight for equality. The honor being bestowed upon them later this month is just one more tribute to their significant contributions to Arkansas and America.

I congratulate each and every one of them on being inducted into the Arkansas Black Hall of Fame and extend my sincere thanks for the impact they have had on the State that we all love and want to make better.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### NOMINATION OF ERIC DREIBAND

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise to oppose the nomination of Eric Dreiband to be the Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department.

Mr. Dreiband has no experience working on many of the most important duties of the Civil Rights Division, such as protecting voting rights, combating hate crimes, and ensuring that police departments respect the Constitution and civil rights laws.

Instead, he has extensive experience representing corporations who have been accused of employment discrimination and advocating against legislation to protect civil rights.

In his personal capacity, he has testified against the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Restoration Act and against legislation to protect older workers from discrimination.

We need a head of the Civil Rights Division who will demonstrate independence and a willingness to preserve the right to vote and civil rights laws in the face of this administration's regressive agenda.

I am not confident that Mr. Dreiband will be the independent leader that the Civil Rights Division needs. I cannot support his nomination.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I rise to oppose the nomination of Eric Dreiband to serve as Assistant Attorney General of the Civil Rights Division. His nomination is an affront to the mission of the Civil Rights Division, the career attorneys, and to everyone in our country dedicated to advancing civil rights.

Created in 1957, the mission of the Civil Rights Division is to "enforce[e] federal statutes prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, disability, religion, familial status and national origin." The Civil Rights Division

has been indispensable in helping our country combat housing discrimination, voting rights abuses, and hate crimes. It has also intervened in cases of police misconduct in certain situations.

Mr. Dreiband is the wrong person to lead the Civil Rights Division. He has spent his entire career advocating for weaker antidiscrimination laws. He has testified in Congress against the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, the Protecting Older Workers Against Discrimination Act, and ban-the-box regulations.

Looking at this record, Mr. Dreiband will do more to undermine than to protect efforts to prevent discrimination. How can someone devoted to fighting against antidiscriminatory laws now be charged with leading an agency that enforces antidiscrimination laws? It is almost as if the Trump administration is "trolling" the agency itself with Mr. Dreiband's nomination.

Unfortunately, under Attorney General Sessions, the Department of Justice has already rolled back Obama-era guidance that terminated the Federal Government's use of private prisons, helped protect vulnerable transgender students, and the Cole memo which allowed prosecutorial discretion in sentencing for drug cases. Mr. Dreiband's record suggests he will continue these attacks on civil rights.

The Assistant Attorney General of Civil Rights Division should be someone that will vigorously protect minority rights and aggressively expand civil rights for all Americans. Mr. Dreiband has shown that he is not that person.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Eric S. Dreiband, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Attorney General?

Mr. CASSIDY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 230 Ex.]

#### YEAS—50

|           |         |         |
|-----------|---------|---------|
| Alexander | Boozman | Cassidy |
| Barrasso  | Burr    | Collins |
| Blunt     | Capito  | Corker  |

|          |            |          |
|----------|------------|----------|
| Cornyn   | Hoeven     | Portman  |
| Cotton   | Hyde-Smith | Risch    |
| Crapo    | Inhofe     | Roberts  |
| Cruz     | Isakson    | Rounds   |
| Daines   | Johnson    | Sasse    |
| Enzi     | Kennedy    | Scott    |
| Ernst    | Kyl        | Shelby   |
| Fischer  | Lankford   | Sullivan |
| Flake    | Lee        | Thune    |
| Gardner  | McConnell  | Tillis   |
| Graham   | Moran      | Toomey   |
| Grassley | Murkowski  | Wicker   |
| Hatch    | Paul       | Young    |
| Heller   | Perdue     |          |

#### NAYS—47

|              |           |            |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Baldwin      | Harris    | Peters     |
| Bennet       | Hassan    | Reed       |
| Blumenthal   | Heinrich  | Sanders    |
| Booker       | Hirono    | Schatz     |
| Brown        | Jones     | Schumer    |
| Cantwell     | Kaine     | Shaheen    |
| Cardin       | King      | Smith      |
| Carper       | Klobuchar | Stabenow   |
| Casey        | Leahy     | Tester     |
| Coons        | Manchin   | Udall      |
| Cortez Masto | Markley   | Van Hollen |
| Donnelly     | McCaskill | Warner     |
| Duckworth    | Menendez  | Warren     |
| Durbin       | Merkley   | Whitehouse |
| Feinstein    | Murphy    | Wyden      |
| Gillibrand   | Murray    |            |

#### NOT VOTING—3

|          |        |       |
|----------|--------|-------|
| Heitkamp | Nelson | Rubio |
|----------|--------|-------|

The nomination was confirmed.  
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture motion for the Stewart nomination be withdrawn and the Senate vote on confirmation of the Stewart nomination and, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of James N. Stewart, of North Carolina, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Stewart nomination.

The nomination was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

#### REMEMBERING MATTHEW SHEPARD

Mr. CASEY. Thank you, Mr. President. I rise to speak to commemorate the horrific death of Matthew Shepard 20 years ago. On October 7, 1998, Matthew Shepard, then a 21-year-old student at the University of Wyoming, was kidnapped, brutally beaten, and left tied to a fence in a field outside of Laramie, WY. He passed away 5 days later in a hospital.

Matthew was attacked because of his sexual orientation. His murder was an act of pure evil, borne of hate.

Since his passing, Matthew's family has worked to share his story in the hope that no other family suffers a similar tragedy. His parents, Judy and Dennis Shepard, started the Matthew Shepard Foundation to honor the life and aspirations of their son. Judy has made countless personal appearances around the country and around the world, sharing Matthew's story, to shine a light on the importance of supporting the LGBT community and eradicating hate. She has relived the horror of his death so that others may not ever know such pain.

I had the opportunity in 2005 to meet Judy Shepard here in Washington, and I was impressed and inspired by her strength. The foundation that the Shepard family has organized has worked to end hate in all forms around the country, starting dialogues at schools, corporations, and communities to promote human dignity for all individuals. They have also provided an online resource center for LGBT youth, helped to create a dialogue about hate crimes through support for The Laramie Project, and helped to advocate for legislation to end hate crimes.

Judy Shepard's work has been successful, and I think that is an understatement. Matthew Shepard's story has resonated with people across the country and inspired change, including the 2009 passage of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr., Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which I was proud to cosponsor. This legislation added perceived gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability as protected classes under existing Federal hate crimes law.

Though we made a great deal of progress over the last 20 years, there is still so much work to do. In 2016, 6,121 hate crime incidents were reported, and of these incidents, 1,076 were based on sexual orientation bias, and 124 were based on gender-identity bias.

In order to help to stop this violence, I am the author of the Disarm Hate Act. This legislation would prevent those convicted of a violent misdemeanor hate crime or those who have received a hate crime sentence enhancement from buying or possessing a gun.

It is critical that we work not only to address hate crimes but to stop the culture of violence or prejudice that often begins as bullying and harassment in our schools. According to a Human Rights Campaign report, LGBT youth are more than twice as likely—twice as likely—as non-LGBT youth to be physically attacked at school.

Similarly, a report by the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network found that four out of five LGBT students reported experiencing harassment frequently in school based on their appearance or perceived sexual orientation. That is why I have consistently introduced the Safe Schools Improvement Act, which would prohibit in K–12 schools bullying and harassment based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

I am also a proud cosponsor of the Equality Act, a landmark civil rights bill that would amend existing civil rights laws to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in education, employment, housing, credit, and Federal jury service.

Matthew Shepard's life and death has inspired great change across our Nation over the last 20 years. His life continues to inspire me and so many others, so many Members of Congress, and, indeed, so many Americans to continue the fight against hate and violence in all its forms.

We just read today, just hours ago, a story in the Washington Post which told us that Matthew Shepard's remains will be interred in the next couple of weeks inside the crypt at the National Cathedral here in Washington. May he rest in peace.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASIDY). The Senator from Louisiana.

#### HEALTHCARE INSURANCE PLANS

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I want to talk for just a few minutes about our efforts to get control of health insurance costs in America. With me today is one of the colleagues from my office, Ms. Katie Dwyer.

The Affordable Care Act has not worked for the American people. I wish it had. I am disappointed that it hasn't. We were promised upon the passage of the Affordable Care Act that our lives would be better. Our lives are worse. We were promised upon passage of the Affordable Care Act that health insurance would be cheaper and more accessible. It has been neither.

As you know, the Senate has tried to come up with a health insurance reform effort to replace the Affordable Care Act. We have not been able to do that, but we didn't quit, as you well know. We have started, through a number of small but meaningful measures, along with the Trump administration, to lower the cost of health insurance for the American people, and we have made substantial progress. It has been lost in the noise, but it is real, none-

theless. I want to briefly talk about two such efforts.

First, association health plans. As you know, one option that has often been missing from our array of health insurance choices is the ability to get together as a group of people, sometimes across State lines, and buy health insurance. Let me explain what I mean by that. Let's suppose you have a chamber of commerce, as many cities and towns do. Those chambers of commerce in my State would join with chambers of commerce in Mississippi, which would join with chambers of commerce in Arkansas, and they would pool all of their members and say to a health insurance provider: Here are all these people who want to buy health insurance. Give us the best deal you can.

Through the economy of scale, we could lower the cost of health insurance. It makes sense, but forever and a day, it hasn't been legal in the United States of America. It now is. In 2017, President Trump issued an Executive order directing Federal agencies to draft regulations to allow the American people to enjoy the fruits of association health plans. In January of this year, the Department of Labor proposed a rule expanding the scope of groups and individuals eligible for banding together as associations and purchasing coverage through an association health plan. The rule was finalized on June 21 of this year, and it became effective on August 20, 2018.

I am not suggesting that association health plans are going to solve all the problems of access to insurance and cost of health insurance in America, but they will help, and they will help because the principle underlying association health plans is that they allow the free market to work.

If you are a member of a Rotary Club, and you want to join with Rotary Clubs in other States or other parts of your State, pool a large group of people together, and go to a health insurance provider and say "I have a lot of potential customers here, and I want to buy major medical insurance. What kind of deal will you give me?" that would be legal in our country.

The second thing we have done, Mr. President, as you are well aware—I consider you an expert in healthcare and in healthcare insurance—has to do with what we call short-term, limited-duration health plans.

What is a short-term, limited-duration health plan? Well, let's suppose that I leave my job and I have employer-provided insurance and I am not sure what I am going to do next. I have some ideas and I have some prospects, but it will probably be 6 months before I will take a new job with a new company that will provide health insurance. There will be a 6-month gap where I and my family will not have health insurance. That is the purpose of short-term, limited-duration health plans.

There are plans offered throughout our country where, if I am in between